

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 04030 271142Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 4030

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, MILI, SP

SUBJ: LT. GEN. CARLOS FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN,

NEW CHIEF OF SPANISH HIGH GENERAL STAFF

REF: MADRID 3800

1. BORN JULY 13, 1913, IN EL FERROL DEL CAUDILLO, GENERAL FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN ENTERED INFANTRY SCHOOL IN 1936, FOUGHT ON THE SIDE OF THE NATIONALISTS DURING THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR. HE WAS WOUNDED AND TAKEN PRISONER, BUT MANAGED TO ESCAPE AND REJOIN NATIONALIST FORCES IN SEVILLE. HE FOUGHT IN VARIOUS SUBSEQUENT CAMPAIGNS, INCLUDING GRANADA, MADRID, ZARAGOZA, AND TARRAGONA. WAS AGAIN TAKEN PRISONER BUT ESCAPED TO FRANCE. AFTER WAR HE ENLISTED IN SPANISH VOLUNTEERS (BLUE) DIVISION WHICH FOUGHT WITH THE GERMANS ON THE RUSSIAN FRONT.

2. IN 1947 FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN GRADUATED FROM THE GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL. SERVED AS CHIEF OS STAFF OF GOMARA (MORROCCO) CIRCUMSCRIPTION 1950-51. IN 1953 SERVED WITH 3RD REGIMENT OF THE LEGION. 1954-59 WAS ASSIGNED CHIEF OS STAFF OF 23RD INFANTRY DIVISION, AND IN NOVEMBER 1959 WAS APPOINTED
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PAGE 02 MADRID 04030 271142Z

MILITARY ATTACHE TO SPANISH EMBASSY IN LISBON WHERE HE

REMAINED UNTIL 1963. 1963 BECAME CHIEF OF 3RD SECTION, CENTRAL GENERAL STAFF AFTER HAVING BEEN PROMOTED TO COLONEL WHILE SERVING IN LISBON.

3. IN 1966 HE BECAME MILITARY GOVERNOR OF CADIZ. IN 1967 HE BECAME CHIEF OF THE 9TH INFANTRY BRIGADE IN GRANADA. LATER THE SAME YEAR HE TOOK OVER AS DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL MILITARY ACADEMY IN ZARAGOZA. IN JULY 1966 HE WAS NAMED COMMANDING GENERAL IN CEUTA WHERE HE REMAINED UNTIL AUGUST 25, 1972, WHEN HE TOOK COMMAND AS CAPTAIN GENERAL OF THE 8TH MILITARY REGION (LA CORUNA), WHERE HE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE PRESENT.

4. FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN IS MARRIED WITH SEVEN CHILDREN. HE SPEAKS PORTUGUESE AND ENGLISH.

5. IN BRIEF MEETING WITH FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN WHEN HE WAS COMMANDING GENERAL OF CEUTA TWO YEARS AGO, DATT NOTED THAT HE WAS A VIGOROUS, DECISIVE COMMANDER WHO WAS NOT AT ALL RELUCTANT TO MOVE INTO OTHER MINISTRIES' AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY TO GET THE JOB DONE. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE WERE SEVERAL CASES OF CHOLERA REPORTED IN MOROCCO DURING PERIOD OF DATT'S VISIT, AND FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN TOLD DATT HE HAD MADE DIRECT CONTACT WITH GOVERNORS OF NEIGHBORING MOROCCAN PROVINCES TO INFORM THEM THAT HE WAS READY TO PROVIDE CHOLERA INNOCULATIONS TO THE RESIDENTS OF THEIR PROVINCES. HE THEN ORDERED THE CEUTA MAYOR TO OPEN INNOCULATION FACILITIES NEAR BORDER CROSSING POINTS TO CARRY OUT HIS PLEDGES TO THE MORROCAN GOVERNORS. AT THE TIME, HE NOTED WITH PRIDE THAT ALL OF THIS HAD BEEN DONE WITHOUT CONSULTING ANY MADRID GOVERNMENT AGENCY WHICH, HE SAID, WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN ONE, DELAY, AND TWO, DENIAL OF AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT THE PROGRAM. FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN SPEAKS AND WRITES ENGLISH, BUT AS OF TWO YEARS AGO, WAS NOT COMFORTABLE IN USING SPOKEN ENGLISH.

6. HE IS EXTREMELY HIGHLY REGARDED BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES AND WAS REPORTEDLY HAND-PICKED BY FRANCO TO BE CAPTAIN GENERAL OF FRANCO'S HOME REGION. TWO SENIOR SPANISH MILITARY OFFICERS WHO HAVE KNOWN FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN FOR NUMBER OF YEARS DESCRIBED HIM TO EMBOFF AS VERY DEDICATED, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MADRID 04030 271142Z

PROFESSIONAL AND APOLITICAL, THOUGH ONE OFFICER ADDED THAT FERNANDEZ VALLESPIN DOES NOT HAVE DIEZ-ALEGRIA'S STATURE. WHILE HE DOES NOT HAVE THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND INTELLECTUAL CREDENTIALS OF DIEZ-ALEGRIA, HE IS DETERMINED PERSON WHO EXPECTED TO BE NO LESS FORCEFUL THAN HIS PREDECESSOR IN ASSERTING HIGH GENERAL STAFF'S COORDINATING ROLE, THOUGH PROBABLY WITH SOMEWHAT LOWER NEWS PROFILE. FUTURE OF CONTROVERSIAL ORGANIC DEFENSE LAW PROPOSAL, WHICH DIEZ-ALEGRIA

BACKED, REMAINS UNCERTAIN.

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